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Sylvie Murray

From the Editor

On with the business of communicating

Our new website is now out, and I hope that you've taken a few minutes to visit it. If you have yet to do so, go to the ["Welcome to the FSA"](#) page under the Home menu for a summary of its new features. We will be adding new material on a regular basis, so make a habit of visiting the website. Just last Friday, for instance, we posted a number of news items and a new "Current Issues" page on [Labour News outside of B.C.](#) Now that we have a better communication tool we will be in a position to share information that didn't fit nicely in the old website, or that would have clogged your in-boxes had we sent everything that comes to us from our partners by email.

The reports and articles included in this issue of our newsletter will leave no doubt that this academic year will be a busy one. Bargaining, rank and tenure, pension, workload, administrative review—these are all big ticket items. They will require that we continue to talk to each other in the hallways and around our desks and offices, through private communications between members and officers, in our new website Discussion Forum and, yes, even at meetings (read Virginia's piece for more on meetings). However you're comfortable, in private, semi-private or public settings, please jump in! Everyone needs to be heard.

I'm appreciative of our members, Christina, Garry and Wayne, who submitted thoughtful letters to the editor; of course, there's still a place for letters to the editor in our age of terse texts, posts, and tweets. A longer, well thought through, and carefully articulated sharing of ideas is always refreshing. It forces us out of a reactive mode, into a constructive dialogue. It invites us to stop and think before we reply.

Speaking of replying: our new e-newsletter format is providing readers—you—the chance to reply to each article, report and letter. Use it. Let us know whether you agree or disagree with the views presented to you; present your own.

Before I invite you to read on, I wish to extend my heartfelt thanks to our most efficient, cool-headed and gracious administrative assistant, Tanja Rourke, for the amazing effort that she put into the website refurbishing project—I would still be promising a refreshed website if it hadn't been for her skills, talents and patience.

UPCOMING Events!

Extraordinary General Meeting

Wednesday, October 24

4 p.m to 5:30 p.m.

Abbotsford theatre B101

To review and ratify the list of proposals & planned strategy for this round of bargaining.

Award opportunity for women students

Application deadline: October 15

Contact lisa.morrey@ufv.ca for more information

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Virginia Cooke

From the President

Between meetings

I've decided that UFV should celebrate and promote what we actually seem to do best. For some years now, we have been referring to ourselves as a “teaching intensive” university (presumably as opposed to a “research” intensive one). And so we are—just ask anyone who this term has the maximum number of fully enrolled courses. But really, to distinguish ourselves, capitalize on our strengths, and reflect our true nature, we need to brand ourselves as a “meeting intensive” university.*

In part, this surfeit of meetings is the price of shared governance: Senate meetings, Senate subcommittee meetings, Faculty Council meetings. Of course, there were always department meetings. But UFV has developed and nurtured these far beyond the norm. Have you tried to talk to a dean lately? Can't. He or she is in a meeting. What about catching your colleague after class? Sorry—got a meeting. But the ultimate challenge: have you tried scheduling a meeting? Nightmare. It's competing with all the other meetings. My heart goes out to the staff whose jobs include endless rounds of matching up schedules of meeting-weary people. The scheduling grid is no doubt like an intricate, interwoven and overlapping tapestry of meetings.

If we declared ourselves “meeting intensive,” then we could begin demonstrating our success, and could soon develop a reputation at a national, and perhaps even international, level. (As it is, some meetings amount to reports on what happened at other meetings.) The *Globe and Mail* would be singing our praises. Our vocabulary has already changed. What were once lunchtime conversations are now referred to as meetings. When you ask someone to do something, “Sorry, I've got a meeting” constitutes an acceptable rejoinder. At the moment, teaching a class is an excuse for declining a meeting, but that could soon turn around—let's get our priorities straight.

I realize that labeling ourselves “meeting intensive” would necessitate incorporating meetings into the curriculum, but what better way to prepare our future graduates for the world outside? We could begin with a “meeting across the curriculum” initiative, and we have vast amounts of expertise to share already. Meeting-focused research would also need recognition. We would need one further ILO (Institutional Learning Outcome): “Demonstrates Meeting Competence.”

As the FSA, we do our part. We have executive meetings, subcommittee meetings, and Joint meetings with the administration, when they're not at their own meetings. We call faculty or staff forums and wonder why so few people show up, but it may not be apathy at all. Probably there's a conflicting meeting. And now, as a *coup de grâce*, we're going to call an Extraordinary General Meeting.

The reason? We need to talk about upcoming contract negotiations. The FSA, and in particular the chief negotiator, need your endorsement of the package of items to take to the bargaining table this fall, and of the proposed strategy for bargaining these changes to our collective agreement. This meeting will be on Wednesday, October 24 from 4:00 to 5:30. You will be receiving a notice with more details.

At our retreat in August (a full day and a half of meetings), this FSA executive renewed its commitment to provide our members with more information, and to seek greater involvement of our constituents. This has

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been the driving force behind the development of a more interactive website with a place for discussion of emerging and ongoing issues. We made plans for the creation of some clearer documents describing the role of the FSA in the working lives of employees. Some of us will probably be requesting a brief spot at one of your department meetings in order to suggest ways you can join in on discussions. We want to make certain that we are fully and accurately representing staff and faculty, protecting and promoting their rights and interests, but to do that, we need to hear your voices and give you a chance to tell us how well we're doing.

As collective bargaining constitutes one of the primary ways the FSA represents you, we want to go forward confident that you know what we are trying to bargain, and that you are in agreement. It has, after all, been several months since the bargaining survey. We know that salary increases were (and no doubt still are) at the top of your list, and we need to know that there is both strong resolve and solidarity as we work to achieve this.

Provincially, things look pretty grim for “public sector” workers. Last year, when I joined other college and university association presidents in Victoria, the government ministers couldn't quit citing what was happening in Greece as the reason for budget woes. This year, it's natural gas prices. To the continual phrase “The cupboard is bare,” one can't help asking, “Who, pray tell, emptied out the cupboard?” It certainly wasn't us.

On a more positive note, polls commissioned by FPSE show that there is great public support for higher education and its value to the public, and further polls commissioned by the BC Federation of Labour indicate considerable public sympathy with the notion that our wages should keep up with the cost of living. We are also, maybe for the first time, located in possible “swing ridings,” and this fact may force our politicians to pay a little bit of attention. In fact, I have a meeting soon with Chilliwack MLA Gwen O'Mahony, who actually requested the meeting because she is interested in hearing from the university's union.

This year may be a wild ride, so hang on.

One more note. In the next few months, FPSE will be conducting a major survey of all members on possible changes to the pension plan. This survey will be extremely important. This last summer, some members volunteered to respond to an initial survey which helped IPSOS Reid in the preparation of the final survey and of an information document. We will be informing you of how you can become educated on the pension options and how and when you can take part in the survey. I can't emphasize too strongly how important it is to take part in this process. You'll have to live with the results for a very long time!

After that glorious and protracted summer, buckling down (and in) to another year seems doubly difficult. I would write more, but I have a meeting . . .

*I want to credit David Thompson from the Communications department with suggesting the phrase “meeting intensive”; he was expressing his frustration in trying to make an appointment with any of his deans or associate deans.



Vicki Grieve

From the Chief Negotiator

Of Post- Secondary Educators and NHL Hockey Players...

Since becoming your chief negotiator, my ears have been attuned to labour news, much the same way that my dog's ears are attuned to the opening of the fridge door and the crinkle of a cheese wrapper. (She can be in a dead sleep, yet still hear that sound!) Lately, my ears have not been disappointed, as there have been labour disputes aplenty this fall, many of them in our own province, and most involving public-sector employees. Yet the story that has captured the most headlines and aroused the most commentary has been that of the recent lockout of NHL players by their employers. Although I am not a true hockey fan, I've found myself paying attention, and drawing some comparisons between the situation in the NHL and our own. The analogy, of course, doesn't really hold, as we are not like the National Hockey League Players' Association and the NHL Board of Governors (i.e. the owners), the "billionaires fighting the millionaires" as they have lately been called in the press. If we put that obvious difference aside, though, there are some similarities in our situations. Faculty and staff at UFV are like the actual players, whose skill and prowess brings in the fans, which in our case, are the students. That makes our administration the team owners, and the provincial government the NHL Board of Governors. Here's the best part of this admittedly lame analogy: Christie Clark is like Gary Bettman! These days, one is about as popular as the other, so this is probably the most valid part of the comparison.

Please don't think I'm in any way suggesting that we are going to be locked out by our employers, the way the NHL players have been. A lockout is a bullying tactic, used by an employer when contract negotiations have completely broken down. It's all but unthinkable in our situation, as the losers in such a conflict would be the students, just as the fans seem to be the clear losers in the current NHL impasse. Perhaps the most instructive aspect of the NHL dispute is the way that neither the players nor the owners are scoring any points in the game of public relations.

From stadiums to offices and classrooms: the labour climate in B.C.

Moving a little closer to home, the B.C. Federation of Labour has just completed an extensive survey designed to gauge public opinion on issues surrounding public sector bargaining. The results of the poll will be officially announced in the next few weeks, but early indicators suggest that the public is generally supportive of workers bargaining reasonable cost-of-living increases in their contracts. This is good news for us, especially since the B.C. voting public places accessible post-secondary education high on their list of services the government should be providing. According to a B.C. Government publication, *The Labour Market Outlook:2010 – 2020*, 78% of the approximately one million jobs to be created in the next eight years will require post-secondary training at the certificate or diploma level, or a degree. There will be no lack of demand for our services, which provide the foundation for the province's economic well-being. In many ways the unionized public post-secondary sector can bargain from a position of strength.

Most of the post-secondary institutions in the province have expired contracts and are entering into bargaining. The other major public-sector unions like the B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU), the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) and various health care unions have been in active negotiations. Early in negotiations with BCGEU, the government offered a 1.5% wage increase in each of the two years the contract will cover. Although the union rejected that offer in May (they were asking for a 1% increase in each of two years, plus a cost of living allowance which would total 6% over the life of the contract), the government's offer seemed to end their vow to freeze public sector salaries. As I began writing this article, BCGUE and the government were talking again, apparently close to reaching an agreement. On September 28th, a tentative agreement was announced. It includes a 4% wage increase over the two year contract. On September 27, the B.C. Nurses' Union announced that it has reached a tentative deal (yet to be ratified with its membership) with its government employer which addresses many of its concerns, including an increase in compensation. These settlements have huge implications for us and other provincial public-sector unions. Although news releases from the provincial government are quick to point out

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that the wage increases have come from savings found within existing budgets (a.k.a cooperative gains), it may become increasingly difficult for the provincial government to deny other unions increases in compensation.

Just last week (October 4, 2012), 12,000 CUPE support staff and teaching assistants at four of the biggest B.C. universities (SFU, UBC, UNBC and Thompson Rivers) took job action. They joined their CUPE colleagues at UVIC, who took a strike vote in August and have been conducting escalating work disruptions ever since. Apparently the big issues facing these workers are job security and wage increases. Although this strike notice does not guarantee strike action, these workers have been without a contract since 2010. At the very least, we can interpret the strike notice as a signal that CUPE is losing patience with the lack of progress being made in their negotiations. (Information on current CUPE job action can be found [here](#).)

As we assess the situation in light of recent contract settlements in the province, it may be that the term “pattern bargaining” can be applied. This term has come up in the context of recent settlements reached between the big three auto manufacturers. The Canadian Auto Workers Union (CAW) Ford settled first, and GM shortly thereafter, gaining identical wage increases. As I'm writing this, Chrysler and CAW have announced a tentative settlement, and their agreement echoes that of the others. I will not be surprised if similar patterns emerge in the public-sector in B.C.

Of course the wild card in our situation is the impending provincial election, and the strategies the government may employ in order to win votes. On September 21 and 22, I, along with others from the FSA executive, attended a FPSE bargaining conference in Vancouver. Friday afternoon, Jim Sinclair, head of the B.C. Council of Labour addressed the negotiators from all the FPSE locals. He claimed that there are three approaches that could be taken by the government in the settlement of contract negotiations. First, they might attempt to settle agreements quickly, to get them out of the way and out of the press. Secondly, they could simply stall, and leave the issues of settlement for their successors to handle. Last and possibly worst, they could dig in their heels and pick a fight with labour, in order to demonstrate their conservative credibility. Given the recent BCGEU's and nurses' settlements, it may be that the first scenario Sinclair outlined is the direction the government is moving in; still, I wish I had a crystal ball. Sinclair's advice was to be firm in our demands for “fair and reasonable” wage increases to cover cost-of-living increases, and to use sector-wide bargaining to our collective advantage. The fact that the majority of post-secondary institutions are bargaining at the same time presents opportunities to coordinate our efforts and maximize our collective power, and our membership in FPSE may play a larger role in this round of negotiations than it has in the past. Although there are many local issues to be dealt with, there are some big issues that all the locals in FPSE have in common. You will be hearing more about these in the weeks to come.

From the big picture to our own bargaining process and proposals

I will soon be sending a letter to our administration which will outline our intent to open our expired agreement and begin the process of bargaining. Before our bargaining team gets to the table, you, the FSA membership, will need to know and approve of the proposals we will bring forward. These proposals will be based on the results of the extensive [bargaining survey](#) conducted by my predecessor, Hilary Turner, in December of 2011, as well as concerns and issues brought forward by members to the FSA executive over the past few months.

There is a tension that arises between the need to communicate openly with all of you about specific bargaining proposals and strategies, and the strategic requirement for confidentiality about proposals and processes. Your FSA Executive is convening an Extraordinary General Meeting on October 24th so that we can discuss with you our bargaining strategies and the specific proposals I will be bringing forward once formal bargaining begins. I therefore urge (implore!) you to come to the E.G.M. so that you have a clear picture of what and how we are going to bargain, and so that your negotiation team can seek your agreement and move forward with your support and approval.

As we proceed with bargaining, I will also be using the secure and private section of our newly re-designed FSA website to keep you informed of new developments. I'm also only an email or phone call away.



Jonathan Hughes

From the Faculty Vice-President

Connecting the dots: rank, tenure, criteria, dossiers, CVs, and collective bargaining

Dear fellow faculty and staff,

Welcome to the 2012-2013 academic year, and if you haven't yet heard, I'm the new FSA faculty vice president replacing Glen Baier, whom I thank for his committed service.

Before diving into FSA-UFV business, I would like to introduce myself. I have been an instructor in the Geography department at UFV since 2006 and consider myself a scientist with a passion for the arts. My post-secondary education started with a B.Sc. in natural resources at the University of the South in Tennessee, followed by an M.Sc. in botany at the University of Wyoming. My Ph.D. is from Simon Fraser University in biology, specifically paleoecology, which blends ecology, taxonomy, and earth science. Following my Ph.D., I joined the U.S. Geological Survey as a Mendenhall Postdoctoral Fellow to study ancient Cascadia earthquakes, which is the topic of my Ph.D. dissertation. UFV is my first academic appointment.

Over the last six years at UFV my work has consisted of moderate amounts of teaching, research, and service that have created collectively a challenging workload in terms of time commitment and required creativity. In addition to teaching a broad spectrum of courses in physical geography, I direct the Paleoecology Laboratory where I supervise students within a research program that focuses on past earthquakes, floods, fires, and environmental change through the collection and analysis of wetland and lake sediment cores. Since graduating from a liberal arts and sciences college, my professional ambitions have been to teach at the undergraduate level and engage students in inquiry-based learning within an active research program.

So why was I interested in becoming the next FSA faculty vice president? I put my name forward because I believe that this year's contract negotiations are important and I want to be part of the discussion. The faculty vice president is on the Finance committee, the Communications committee, and the Contract committee, so discussion I will get. Important issues for me include rank and tenure and administration accountability. As you can see from the description of my own work, I'm acutely aware of the workload pressures on faculty, and within that context, one of my primary objectives is to help establish standard academic ranks and tenure at UFV, which I believe we can do and retain our integrity as a primarily undergraduate institution with diverse programs. That said, I am willing to listen to and fairly represent all sides of issues.

To my understanding, most of us agree with the notion of tenure as it supports academic freedom, but it's clear that the language of tenure, and the strength of that language to protect faculty except in extreme cases of financial exigency, differs across universities. Email feedback about the [Working Document on Tenure](#) that was submitted by the FSA Rank and Tenure committee prior to forums this spring was minimal, but not all positive. As for ranks, we have been discussing this issue for quite some time and we cast our opinions in an online bargaining survey last December. Although some argue that low voter response diminishes the validity of the survey, among those who voted, the percentage in favour of pursuing a system of rank and tenure in this round of bargaining is decisive. From my perspective, we need ranks so UFV will register as advanced education, rightly or wrongly, in the eyes of our off-campus audience, especially as we increase our online course offerings. We need ranks so that when we apply for grants or write letters of recommendation the recipients will regard our efforts as certified, and we need ranks to attract outstanding faculty and students. The FSA plans to discuss rank and tenure with the UFV administration as part of contract negotiations that are scheduled to begin this month.

To best prepare for the negotiations it is important that you participate in the discussion and the FSA has created a place on its website for this purpose. Use the secure [Discussion Forum](#) to ask questions and get informed about topics important to your current and future employment at UFV. As discussions about rank and tenure take place, it is important that your department determine criteria for measuring best practices for teaching, service, and scholarship in

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your discipline. Make your criteria align with defined [Institutional Learning Outcomes](#). Please keep in mind that faculty councils and the senate, not the FSA or the administration, will establish these criteria and the FSA will help determine their fair application through contract negotiations with the administration. For more information refer to the [September 19 Joint statement on current discussions of criteria for teaching, scholarship, and service and how these discussions relate to future contract negotiations](#). At the individual level, we need to create teaching portfolios and update our curriculum vitae to be useful for rank and promotion.

To consider what might become best practice at UFV in regards to rank and tenure, it is important to learn how it is done at similar institutions you respect. For me, two excellent neighbour institutions that I believe can help to guide our policies include Western Washington University (WWU) and the Evergreen State College. WWU is similar in size to UFV and engages graduate students more than Evergreen, but both institutions place their primary commitment on undergraduate education. Evergreen is one of the best institutions for undergraduate education in the US according to the *Princeton Review* while WWU is ranked by *U.S. News and World Report* as the finest masters-granting university in the Pacific Northwest. While WWU uses standard ranks and tenure, Evergreen chose a contract system with no academic ranks. Below are some links that provide information about these exemplary institutions and their policies.

Evergreen:

<http://www.evergreen.edu/about/home.htm>

<http://www.evergreen.edu/policies/docs/UFE%20Agreement%202008.pdf>

WWU:

<http://www.wwu.edu/about/>

<http://www.wwu.edu/fairhaven/resources/faculty/FairhavenAcademicUnitPlan012710.pdf>

I have focused on rank and tenure in this report, but I am ready and willing to hear and bring forward any of your concerns. Once again, I encourage you to join the discussion.

Kindly yours,
Jonathan



Martin Kelly

From the **Staff Vice-President**

Dear Colleagues,

Are we really colleagues, or do we happen to work at the same place? If you are not sure where you sit on this question, be prepared to be put to the test. Possibly. And this test is called: The Post-Secondary Administrative Service Delivery Transformation Project. If you have not yet heard, this is a B.C. Government initiative to cut \$50 million dollars from the post-secondary budget outside of the classroom. (See the FSA [web page](#) for more details). The short translation is, if these cuts are realized they will fall on the heads of staff. I have been advised many times not to incite people to set their hair

on fire by speculating on possibilities not yet come to pass. Sometimes I listen. In this case I feel obliged to say something.

For one, I talk to staff on a regular basis and it is clear that people are already worried if not afraid. I have been at UFV for only seven years, long enough to see the cafeteria, security, and parking privatized. If you were a UFV staffer, would you not be wondering what's next? Maybe it won't happen this time. Maybe they can buy paper clips in bulk to make the cuts. If they can't and it means layoffs, what then? The FSA has no control over what comes down from on high. We have not been asked for input. We can only react. Will the reaction be no, enough is enough, or will it be sorry, affected staff, sucks to be you?

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You may be a fan of cutbacks and privatization, even see them as necessary. You may feel beaten down and powerless, or that if it doesn't affect you directly you don't need to worry about it. All the same I'm going to ask you to consider taking a stand in the event we are handed a scenario which puts an onerous burden on the backs of your staff colleagues. Here's why: There is no foreseeable relief coming in the form of more funding. The hammer hangs over all our heads, faculty and staff alike, and unless we hang together we will be picked off one by one, position by position. It's not even a matter of arguing for more money (although I would). It's a matter of transparency and fairness in how what we have to work with gets divided. It's about putting accountability and responsibility where it belongs. If we don't start insisting on this as a collective, what are we doing? Consider my position within the FSA as staff vp. What am I in good conscience supposed to tell my members if push comes to shove and support evaporates? The rest of the FSA executive has been awesome, but they are not you. Your union is only as strong as the support of its members.

Remember, the FSA does not decide where money is spent. We—you—can only respond. Maybe the imminent report will recommend no changes at all. Maybe we'll all get a raise! Maybe. But if not, what are you prepared to do? Start thinking about it.



Linda Toews

From the Faculty Contract Administrator

Welcome to 2012 – 13

What a wonderful start to the school year this amazing B.C. weather is giving us. I vote that this weather continues forever!!!

Just as our students may need a bit of a knowledge refresher in September, I thought it might be helpful for our members to have a bit of a refresher on what the faculty contract administrator does, and when and how to contact me.

I moved offices over the summer and now have a great work space (B346) which is close to Abbotsford Faculty Services (3rd floor B building) and the FSA office (B377). I am a lot easier to find than last semester, but E-mail or phone still work well as ways to reach me too.

Both the faculty and the staff contract administrator provide advice and counsel to FSA members at all campuses, receive information on possible grievances from members, investigate, and take grievances through the informal and formal grievance steps as specified in the Collective Agreement. Both contract administrators are involved in contract maintenance: interpreting and enforcing the Collective Agreement through participation on FSA and joint employer/union committees. The faculty contract administrator ensures FSA representation on faculty SACs, and often performs the observer role on SACs or arranges for a steward to act as an observer.

How do you know when you need to contact us?

Sometimes you don't know that you need help from the FSA in a workplace matter until you are in the middle of it. It is OK to contact us at any time when you have questions or feel like something is not quite right in your situation, even if you have already started a process. It makes our jobs a lot easier if you contact us early and we can help to represent you in a process right from the beginning. It is OK to ask a co-worker or a supervisor to stop a conversation or a meeting while you consult with the FSA; it's your right, and you should never feel uncomfortable about doing so. Speaking up and speaking out can sometimes be difficult, but if you don't stand up for yourself, we don't have the opportunity to stand up for you. An example, also reinforced in Staff Contract Administrator David Shayler's column, is regarding SAC's. If you are an internal candidate for a position, it is a good idea to let us know early so we can arrange to have an FSA representative

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observe the SAC proceedings. Human Relations is working hard to streamline and standardize processes and procedures for SACs, but we do find that we are frequently asked about SAC processes from the Collective Agreement perspective. It's an easier process for us to participate as an observer from the outset than to try to investigate a decision after the recommendation has been made.

Want to get involved in union work? Be informed, get involved...

There are many opportunities to become involved with your FSA, formally-ranging from volunteering to serve as a steward to standing for election for an executive position. Informally, the most important first step to becoming informed and involved with the FSA is by reading communications (such as this newsletter), [getting to know](#) your elected executive members and stewards, becoming familiar with the Collective Agreement (click [here](#) for a searchable pdf version or to consult specific articles) and attending meetings and forums which are held periodically.

May you live in interesting times...

Living in B.C. in 2012 and being a member of organized labour can't help but be interesting. If you want to become better informed on the issues facing us I recommend the [Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives](#) for solid background information on the social, political and economic issues facing all of Canada, and the [B.C. Federation of Labour](#) for background and breaking news on the B.C. Labour front. You can subscribe for e-mail updates or "like" the Facebook option for receiving information from both these organizations.

Contact info:

As I mentioned I am now in B346, Abbotsford Campus, my phone extension is still 4354, cell phone is 604 302 4405 and e-mail is linda.toews@ufv.ca.



David Shayler

From the

Staff Contract Administrator

I would like to start by thanking all of you who have been so supportive during my transition into this position. Although I am experiencing an interesting learning curve (to say the least), the encouragement I've received from colleagues, past and present, is very appreciated during this adjustment.

Although the summer semester seemed quiet, I did hit the ground running in June. It started with a couple of staff lay-offs due to budget restraint and program suspension due to lack of student applications. I am pleased to pass on that we were able to place these members in available positions and without displacing others (other than those covering the positions temporarily—sorry).

As I continue to introduce myself to staff members and affix faces to names, a relatively common and subjective conversation seems to arise—workload. Some members are feeling a little overwhelmed with the workloads put on them when compared to time allotted to complete these tasks. Most feel they should be compensated for it, and I have a tendency to readily agree, but as I dig deeper into this dialogue other issues usually come up. First, some will work overtime in order to complete assignments for which they don't normally have time and for which they don't expect compensation, because they feel it will reflect badly on them. Others will work OT and then become upset when they are not compensated for it because the OT wasn't approved by their direct supervisor in the first place.

Question: if your overtime isn't approved, why are you working it? Also, tasks can usually be prioritized. Know how much time you need for the priority tasks, and when you fall short in getting the less important jobs done, start a conversation

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with your supervisor about the time needed for them. Most of the time, open conversation will stimulate ideation and you should be part of that.

Earlier in the summer the Ministry proposed the [Administrative Service Delivery Transformation Project](#). It didn't take long for staff to start wondering whether their jobs were in peril. It is too early to know exactly what to expect from this project but there are a few things working in your favour. First, is the FSA. Your union takes this matter very seriously and it is prepared to act aggressively and swiftly if any member's job is threatened. Second, I believe in good faith that the employer will do all it can to maintain the staff it has currently. Lastly, as the Liberal government dismantles itself, the possibility of their agenda falling apart may follow. If anything is in peril, it would be this. So let's not forecast doom and gloom just yet.

On another topic, if you are an internal staff member applying for a position and know that external or other internal candidates are being interviewed as well, please confirm that an FSA rep will be there to observe SAC procedures. Most of the time, when I am informed of these interviews taking place, I will do my best to be there or have a steward take my place but, very occasionally, one will be missed. It is in the best interest of everyone involved that the FSA be present throughout this process.

Finally, if anyone feels they would like to become more involved with the FSA (maybe try being a [steward](#)), I encourage you to get in contact with me or anyone of my friendly cohorts.



Moira Kloster

From the [Agreements Chair](#)

Workload: can you do it all and still have your weekends?

You're overworked, right? You go home every night knowing there's more you should have done, could have done, and probably still won't get done tomorrow. You're exhausted, and yet you suspect others get away with doing much less than you do. It doesn't seem fair.

Can we get a grip on workload? Could you do your job—your whole job—and still have your evenings, your weekends, and your whole vacation? (No, come on, stop laughing.)

The first thing the FSA and management learned in last year's six Letter of Agreement committees on workload is that it's easy to see the extent of the problems but extremely difficult to pinpoint where they start. We just don't have good tracking mechanisms for what's burning up our time. The second thing we learned is that many of the problems can't be bargained. We can't bargain that your students—or your colleagues!—won't be needier this year. We can't bargain that a change in technology will never cause you extra work for weeks (months?) while the new system still isn't functioning properly. We can't bargain that no-one will make unreasonable requests of you at the last minute, or that you will not feel obliged to try to accommodate them.

Even if the ministry should, by a miracle, suddenly decide to give us a pay raise in this round of bargaining, that wouldn't solve the problem, because money doesn't put more time in our day. For most of us, the problem is 25 hours work in a 24-hour day. No matter how much we do, it is never enough to get the whole job done.

How can we identify and track the key stressors—the “burnout” causers? How can we find and implement solutions without just putting the burden back on individuals to “work smarter, not harder”?

First, we have to see if we can describe what is “enough”. What comes in between too much work and too little? If you're doing “too much” of something, you're likely not only too busy but too stressed and tired from some parts of your workload to cope with the rest of it. If you think you're doing “too little” of something, you're still not likely enjoying your

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work—either you're missing the opportunity to do parts of your job you'd really like to get to, or you're wondering when someone is going to come down on you hard because you haven't been doing what you should. “Enough” would be that magic zone in the middle where you do get things done by their deadlines, the work doesn't come in faster than you can handle it, you aren't tied up with unexpected or unreasonable demands ... and when you go home, your time is your own.

Sometimes the right solution will be bargaining. If your job can be redefined to cover fewer duties, and you can see a way to do this, it is a bargaining year and Vicki Grieve will be happy to hear from you.

But although there are some cases of overwork that could be bargained back to reason, most can't. Here's the problem. A union exists to create and protect good working conditions, and a Collective Agreement exists to set out those working conditions in an enforceable way. It sounds good, but it only works for quantifiable elements like the hours to be worked and the duties assigned. We can maximize the number of hours you must work, and we can set limits on the duties you are assigned. We do, and we have. Typically, though, what the Letter of Agreement committees found was that we are not technically being overworked in this sense. Our workloads do fit within the Collective Agreement guidelines.

“No!” you cry. “It can't be!” How can your work fit the Collective Agreement and still be “too much”?

Well, it can if your work is stressful and fast-paced. You might, technically, have the time to do the job, but not the energy. Perhaps parts of your job drain your mental resources until you just can't concentrate well enough to do the rest even when you have time. Perhaps the job is such a steady slog that you find yourself working slower without realizing it and the tasks pile up in front of you.

Another way your job can be “too much” is if conditions have changed in your area since the last time your workload was established through bargaining, or through JCAC, or through curriculum review. Maybe the use of technology has ramped up and you spend much more of your time keeping up to date. Or the number of part-time students has increased and each student's paperwork needs every bit as much time as a full-time student. Or something beyond the institution's control has changed. The patients in hospital these days are sicker because of the Ministry's policy to release the less sick patients sooner. So your nursing students on practicums are dealing with more complex medical issues and need more of your help than they used to. What used to be a reasonable number of students to supervise is now unmanageable, even though the number of hours in the hospital is the same.

When the FSA and management began to look at specific teaching areas with workload concerns in last year's Letters of Agreement committees, the first thing we realized was that people know they feel overworked, but they can't pinpoint where the problems are. Work comes together as a complicated package—squeeze more in here and something pops out somewhere else. The teaching gets too tough to do in two semesters, so faculty in the area start to spread their teaching load over three semesters in order to manage it, and then nobody's getting a vacation or finding time to prepare courses. The schedules are so complicated there's no time during term to get everyone together for planning, so they meet in the Christmas break instead. What starts as a teaching issue, or a scheduling issue, becomes an overtime issue. And it is extremely difficult to track exactly where and how the problems begin or could be dealt with. Often we can't even talk “apples to apples” with our immediate colleagues, because they lead study tours and we don't, or they do front-desk work and we don't.

This is why we have to back up and ask, “What would 'enough' look like?”

Management has absolutely no interest in making you work through your vacations or Christmas break, or even beyond a 35-hour week. If you say, “I'll need overtime to do this”, management can—and for staff, usually does—say, “No, we're not authorizing that”. And to faculty who claim they have too much grading to do, the equivalent response is, “Set fewer assignments”. But does the staff member say cheerfully, “All right. I'm off now”? Not likely—it won't seem like “enough” has been done just because management says so, it will seem like something's been shortchanged. And for faculty, who can't even get overtime pay for taking evenings and weekends to do their prep and marking and scholarship, it's more likely they'll say, “But I can't meet the right standards if I don't.” They too won't feel like they've done “enough” if they stop sooner—they'll feel that they have compromised their professional identity, either because they shortchanged their students or because they had too little time for their scholarship.

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On the one hand, from a union-management perspective, it is entirely management's responsibility if the job cannot be done up to the required standard in the hours allotted. If the students' paperwork isn't handled quickly enough or the student hasn't had enough practice in the course material, those student complaints should go to management and they should be management's problem to deal with. It's for management to explain why this happened, and to fix the problem if it can—hire more staff, lower class sizes, reduce teaching workload. Or, in these days (years) of crippling financial restraint, to reduce expectations instead. Education will be only as good as we can afford with these salary dollars.

On the other hand, from an employee perspective, that's exactly the problem with the problem. We're the ones looking at the students face to face, seeing them struggle because their financial aid isn't there yet or because they're just not understanding the course. We're the ones who count ourselves as professionals, doing our best to communicate well, to advise wisely, to deliver excellence in teaching. Are we really going to look those students in the eye and say, "Sorry, I could do more but I won't"? Not likely—we couldn't look ourselves in the eye in the mirror afterwards.

Neither of these perspectives gives us a route to a comfortable solution. If someone says directly to you, "Just let it go", or "Don't work so hard", or "Work smarter, not harder", any of the other supposedly helpful advice that gives you permission to do less, you're not likely to feel comforted or affirmed. Instead, these helpful words come across as a direct attack on your competence and professionalism. What, you're too stupid to know how to set effective assignments and mark efficiently? You're too empathetic to the students you're advising? You're too meticulous in following procedures properly? We want recognition, not criticism, for the extra effort we've put in

Yet we usually also have to admit that no amount of recognition, not even lots more money, would stop us getting exhausted. How are we to reconcile our own high expectations of our performance with what our time and energy actually permit? It's worth repeating that management has absolutely no desire to see us burn out—the long-term disability payments would cripple the insurance plan, for starters. And while management hires for and encourages people who will go out of their way to do a good job, a "good job" never means evenings, weekends, and vacations. We make our own traps through our own good intentions.

My aim this year is to find a way to start us out of this two-sided trap. We want to be able to recognize people's commitment to quality without enabling them to continue to exhaust themselves. We want to be able to find fixable faults in how work is organized and performed, instead of blaming individuals for not being smart enough to manage their own workloads better. And "we" needs to be both FSA and management, to ensure the co-operation and resources that allow for a constructive institution-wide initiative instead of piecemeal case-by-case firefighting.

If it was easy, you'd have figured it out by now. If you could do it by yourself, you probably would have. So let's take advantage of what emerged from the Letter of Agreement committees last year to start thinking about workload problems not as the result of individual failings, or insufficient personal creativity, but as shared problems in need of co-operative solutions.

To start with, here are some key questions to ask about your work. Set aside for the moment the standards you set for yourself—just focus on the workload as you currently experience it.

- What do you think you do too much of?
- What do you not have time to get around to?
- Who's affected by the job you do, and whose co-operation would you need to do things differently?
- What's changed about your work since you last took a close look at it? (What's new about what you do in the last year/five years/ten years?)

Start here, and in the next two issues of *Words & Visions* we'll see how the answers can begin to tame the workload monsters.

If that's not soon enough for you, please contact me directly: Moir.Kloster@ufv.ca. I'll add you to the list of people and areas we're compiling.



Lisa Morry

From the FPSE Status of Women Rep

Opportunities to get involved in women's issues

UFV's status of women committee, a women's scholarship opportunity, women's campaign school, missing and murdered Aboriginal women, a note about Abbotsford's Warm Zone, the most recent Fraser Valley Coalition for Women meeting, upcoming events, and a women's centre for this university, may interest you gentle reader.

As your Status of Women representative, my duties include creating and chairing a status of women committee. Please email or call me if you would like to be part of this year's committee. It would be great to have more minds working on upcoming projects.

If you know a full-time, undergraduate female student, in a field that is underrepresented by women, who demonstrates financial need, good citizenship, community involvement, and has strong academic standing, please recommend her for a Gaming Education Award sponsored by the Canadian Federation of University Women West Vancouver. Time is tight. The application must be forwarded to me by Monday October 15. The award criteria and application form can be found [here](#), or by contacting me.

The Canadian Women Voters Congress women's campaign school, October 19-20, is a non-partisan event featuring speakers who share knowledge and experience about our political system. "It is a fantastic learning opportunity for women who wish to run for local government, provincially, federally or pursue an elected role in community or labour organizations and for women who are interested in learning more about how the process works," says Raj Sihota, Canadian Women Voters Congress. Hedy Fry, Gwen O'Mahony and Penny Priddy are some of the speakers. For more information, click [here](#).

It's too late to attend this event but it is worth drawing attention to the [Native Women's Association's Sisters in Spirit vigil](#) held on October 4. The vigil honours the 582 missing or murdered Aboriginal women in Canada, whom the Native Women's Association says they have documented.

Fraser Valley Coalition for Women members received good news about Abbotsford's Warm Zone at the September 11 meeting on the Abbotsford campus. Michele Giordano, from the [Women's Resource Society of the Fraser Valley](#) said she expected MLA Mike de Jong to announce funding for the Warm Zone. Later that day the Warm Zone, which supports Abbotsford and Mission women in leaving street life, received a \$172,000 one-time grant from gaming funds.

Also at the Fraser Valley Coalition for Women meeting, I outlined two events we would like to organize for our UFV campuses. We're planning to mark the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women on Thursday, December 6, probably on the Chilliwack Canada Education Park campus. And we are hoping to partner with the Fraser Valley Women's Coalition to host an International Women's Day event, March 8, on the Abbotsford campus.

If you want to help with these events or in working toward a UFV Women's Centre, call me at local 2471 or email me at lisa.morry@ufv.ca.



Melissa Walter

From the FPSE Human Rights & International Solidarity Rep

Greetings from your new Human Rights rep

Editor's Note: As announced on October 5, Melissa was appointed in this position by the Executive committee to complete the remainder of Adrienne Chan's term.

I am happy to be serving the UFV community in the role of human rights and international solidarity representative. I understand that the role includes liaising with FPSE around human rights and international solidarity issues, and organizing events for the UFV community. These issues are important to me because of their relevance to our work as teachers and as contributors to knowledge: if (as it can be) education is a process of liberation, understanding human rights issues is important to this process. In addition, I find these issues compelling because of their implications for our working conditions and our awareness of solidarity with other union members. I look forward to learning more about how we can work together. I hope that my experience co-organizing events at UFV is good preparation for this role. The events I have helped organize include the visits of scholars and writers Tomson Highway and Cheryl Suzack. The latter spoke on "Indigenous women, literature, and the law," and addressed issues such as judges' awareness of indigenous perspectives.

Upcoming event

The Racism/Anti-Racism Network at UFV will organize a Human Rights panel for December 4 from 4-6 p.m. to be held at the Center for Indo-Canadian Studies. The focus of the panel will be migrant workers. My hope is that the FSA will co-sponsor this panel, as it is focused on labour issues and human rights. In addition, I hope to organize a Safe Harbour event in Winter 2013, and to collaborate with RAN on strategies for publicizing Safe Harbour to students and faculty at UFV. Please send me your suggestions for other events that we could hold at UFV to raise awareness about human rights and international solidarity issues.

Solidarity, National and International

Some FPSE locals are sponsoring students from Quebec who are celebrating their success at preventing tuition increases. I have been told that this issue is within my purview as HRIS rep. I think that the issue of tuition costs is a difficult one for us. The current provincial government seems unlikely to put more money into the post-secondary system, so low tuition means less money for our institution, including less money for salaries and aspects of our working conditions, such as adequate facilities and release time, that facilitate our well-being and our ability to educate students. At the same time, we have a strong interest in the accessibility of public education at the post-secondary level.

I believe that there is often not enough understanding of our collective responsibility to each other. International discussions about the price of labour and about social responsibility can provide perspective on the issue of university tuition. An interesting perspective from the American context comes from Barbara Ehrenreich's short youtube video [Nickle and Dimed](#), based on her book by the same name. After a bright young man states that his investment banker friends devote millions of dollars to philanthropic work, Ehrenreich says, "The real philanthropists in our society are the people who work for less than they can actually live on, because they are giving of their time, and their energy, and their talents, all the time so that people like you can be dressed well and fed well and cheaply, and so on. *They're giving to you.*" The assumption that wealthy people are individually responsible for their success and therefore should have much more access to such goods as education (and the reverse for those dealing with challenges and barriers) is based on a particular and partial evaluation of economic life. The current American election is bringing such issues into sharp relief, and this text of the singer [Moby responding to Mitt Romney's disdainful statement](#) about 47% percent of U. S. voters eloquently makes the case for society's investment in people who may need support at one time or another. Thankfully Canada has had, to date, more of a safety net and more willingness to invest in civil society than the U. S. has had. But with the current skewing of the political conversation to the right, it bears repeating that our society has a collective interest in educating people well at the post-secondary level—and that education should be available not only to the children of wealthy or middle class families, but to all students who seek to develop themselves and their ability to contribute to society as citizens and as workers. This means investing in the post-secondary system. As educators we have, I think, some responsibility to speak up for this principle. I hope that the union can help to raise awareness of international labour issues as these connect with the educational context, and I welcome feedback and input into how to approach these matters.



David MacDonald

From the FPSE Non-Regular Employees Rep

Voices from the Wilderness

First thing to say is welcome back to another year at UFV! As with all semester beginnings, these days seem chaotic, hectic, and full of challenges—students scurrying around, staff struggling to keep up with demands, and instructors wondering what they've got themselves into. If history and experience are any indication, things will find their own natural pace and before you know it the term is nearly over.

It's been particularly hectic for me; as I assumed my responsibilities as non-regular staff and faculty representative with the FSA executive over the summer. It immediately became clear to me that I had to quickly acquaint myself with the members of the executive, the collective bargaining agreement, and, of course, the non-regular members of our FSA. I have had slightly more success with the former than the latter. Still, I am very anxious to meet (i.e. handshakes, emails, phone calls, etc.) as many of the non-regular faculty and staff as I can over the coming months.

Assuming the mantle of non-regular rep is made significantly more daunting by the understanding that we are not considered a priority in the minds of those who manage and administer our university's business. Indeed, I would be shocked to learn that we occupy *any* of their time or concerns. I would also add that I was taken aback that this should be the case. Perhaps, in the past, I had spent too much time with supportive regular faculty members who constantly assured me that I was an important and very much integral part of this school. Perhaps I was naïve in thinking that a group of instructors who are responsible for nearly a third of the courses taught at UFV would be appreciated as those who make a very significant contribution to the quality of the learning experience for our students. Perhaps I incorrectly assumed that many regular faculty appreciated the fact that their own salaries and generous benefits are made possible in large part by the existence of a 'permanent underclass' of part-time instructors and employees. The sheer cost savings of having a group of people working for less than half the salary and without *any* benefits enjoyed by regular employees is a tremendous financial resource for UFV. Hundreds of thousands of dollars are saved by this system and these savings can be diverted to other sources; in particular, salaries and benefits for regulars—possibly even salaries and benefits to administrators as well!

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As far as we, the union, is concerned: Are the non-regular faculty and staff barely an after-thought in our negotiations with the administration? Will some of our issues be included in this round of bargaining? Are we 'in the wilderness'—forgotten, ignored, or worse—or are we considered full and equal members of this institution and union?

Who or what is to blame for our second-class status? Unfortunately, there are many sources of disappointment here. We can point our fingers at the administration and accuse them of callously exploiting some of their best (albeit part-time) instructors for the sake of saving precious funds. We can accuse any number of regular faculty members of shameless self-interest in demanding more for themselves while insisting non-regulars get nothing at all. We can argue that it flies in the face of the principles of equality and fairness that those who receive the greatest remuneration and benefits demand even more without supporting those who receive the least in gaining some small increase in compensation. We can blame the provincial government and its Ministry of Education for freezing funds to post-secondary institutions and refusing to consider the growing needs of our institutions and employees. We can even blame our own labour association, the FSA, for failing to uphold its own principles and for not fighting for the least protected and least compensated of us. There is surely blame enough to go around. But...

Perhaps the greatest blame lies elsewhere. In order for us to be taken seriously as a body of employees who hold perfectly reasonable grievances regarding our treatment, we cannot expect a budget-minded administration, self-interested regular faculty, or a disinterested provincial government to make any efforts to support us if we will not press our issues upon *them* in concrete and forceful ways. This is not a call to arms. Would that it be so simple! However, we *must* be prepared to assert ourselves and to press our issues in upcoming negotiations of the collective bargaining agreement.. Such assertion can only be accomplished by organization and determination on the part of all part-time employees. Yes, I will say it: "United we stand and divided we fall". If we ourselves are not committed to changing the status quo, it is absolutely certain to remain intact.

So...you and I have some work to do. For my part, I will be bringing a motion before the FSA Executive committee to ask it to allow us to create a "non-regular and part-time employee" negotiating committee that can bargain face-to-face with the administration on our own behalf. The proposed committee would exist inside the FSA and function as a sub-committee of the extant FSA negotiating committee. Such a sub-committee would have the opportunity to address issues which concern non-regular faculty and part-time employees. On Friday and Saturday (Sept. 28 and 29), I attended a joint conference with FPSE and the Non-Regular Faculty Committee as well as meetings with CAUT. I heard what others have been doing on behalf of non-regular faculty and I am bringing home some new ideas, strategies, and the support of our counterparts in BC and throughout Canada (I'll write more on these later). With the generous support of others, I have also been creating a list of all UFV non-regular faculty and staff's email addresses. Once completed, we will finally have the opportunity to connect more regularly with each other, raise issues and questions, and determine our course going forward.

For *your* part, I want to implore you to do several things. First, please give some thought to what you feel are the most pressing issues that need to be addressed in the bargaining process now underway; and send them along to me. At some point, we need to find a degree of consensus regarding salaries, benefits, seniority, long-term contracts, representation, and any issues you feel we should be devoting our energies toward. Second, please do contact me (david.macdonald@ufv.ca) so that I can be sure to add you to the email list-serve. This is crucial for us to be able to communicate much more effectively. Third, and perhaps most importantly, we need you to make a commitment to yourselves and all other non-regular employees; that you are determined to support the solidarity of our group and become active in it. All my efforts and those of others who are fighting for you will be for naught if we are not in solidarity. Remember, the greatest advantage we give those who would leave us forever in the wilderness is a lack of commitment and solidarity. Without it, we can do nothing. With it, we have the tools and support to create dramatic and positive changes for everyone at UFV.

Letters to the Editor

by Garry Fehr

Dear Editor,

First of all I would like to thank the FSA for meeting with members on June 19th about the issue of Tenure. I strongly support the FSA to include the issue of Tenure in this current round of bargaining. However, just to be clear, if the bargaining committee had to choose between the issue of Rank or Tenure, I would prefer that the question of Rank be settled first as it is very important to me for obtaining funding for research, internships for students and partnerships with other universities and organizations. Rank is of particular importance to my work in India, as credential status among officials and academics is highly important and the rank of Instructor is considered low status.

That being addressed, the issue of Rank is set aside for the remainder of this letter. I believe that Tenure is an important issue for the members of the FSA and the credibility of the university for the following reasons:

- 1) Tenure puts a greater burden on the university to open their books and prove that layoffs are essential to maintain financial solvency than the current situation where we lack Tenure;
- 2) Tenure will provide an increased capacity to attract and keep high quality faculty, which is very important if we wish to continue providing top quality education.

I believe that the document that was circulated regarding Tenure deals with the issue in a fair and sensitive manner considering our evolution from community college to university. This includes a five – six year period for new faculty to apply for Tenure. However, I believe that there should be a two year evaluation that provides new faculty an opportunity to see if they are on the right track and a further three years to establish their teaching portfolio, a research agenda or program of scholarship and settle into appropriate areas of service. The current system of two years is insufficient time for a faculty member to become properly established in a healthy balance of teaching, scholarship and service.

Secondly, I appreciate that the document respects the diversity of UFV by putting the onus on departments or perhaps broader areas (where departments consist of fewer than perhaps 10 faculty) to determine what standards should be established for achieving Tenure. That being said, I would expect that a general institution wide standard would be set by the university that would still allow departments to adapt to the unique nature of their programs. For example the Global Development Studies program may put more emphasis on development projects than pure research in the Geography program.

Thank-you for taking the time to meet with concerned FSA members.

Sincerely

Garry Fehr, PhD
Department of Geography
Director of the Global Development Institute

Rank and Tenure at UFV – Bringing Authentic Discussion Forward

by Christina Neigel

A system of rank and tenure will *forever alter UFV culture*. If you have not spent much time participating in the discussion, it might be a good time to start because the implications are significant to you.

It is ironic that an academic faculty that is seeking to strengthen its academic freedoms through tenure has not engaged in a more open and friendly discussion about the implications of introducing rank and tenure to UFV. The Abbotsford June forum revealed that members of the FSA executive are determined to forge ahead on designing a proposal that will shape rank and tenure at UFV. This movement is informed by the bargaining survey conducted in December 2011. A

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closer look at the results reveals that participation was poor. While 61% of respondents were in favour of pursuing rank, tenure and promotion in the upcoming bargaining cycle, it should be clarified that this represents 139 of 597 eligible voters—only 214 people participated in this survey question. If only regular faculty are considered, those wishing to pursue rank, tenure and promotion constitute about 37.6% of faculty. If sessionals are considered, that number drops to 23.3%. It may be argued that through their lack of survey participation, the majority of faculty defer to the decisions endorsed by those who did participate. However, because the results of this survey will lead to a process of disruptive change to the cultural fabric of the UFV workplace, it is essential that ALL faculty begin weighing in on the issues. There is still time for balanced discourse, as an urgency to deal with this matter is purely voluntary.

While rank and tenure may, ultimately, be systems that UFV faculty wish to implement, it is absolutely critical that we are ALL clear on the risks and benefits of such a system. The forum held in Abbotsford was attended by a small number of people (less than 20) which is troubling considering the number of people that would be affected by decisions ensuing from such a meeting. There was also a reluctance to discuss the risks of a rank and tenure process. Indeed, suggesting that this is an area worthy of discussion appeared to be interpreted as a “fear” of the process. It is important to clarify that discussing the pros and cons of such a system is not a sign of fear or insecurity but a sign of careful and rational reflection. There is absolutely nothing wrong in asking basic questions about WHY this process is being pursued and seeking documentation and evidence that outlines a problem in need of a solution. In addition, there is value in taking this time to consider creative ways of addressing faculty concerns and not, simply, trying to copy and paste systems that are used elsewhere. As someone who was drawn to this institution because of the cultural values that UFV embraced, it is for the sincerest of reasons that I present my concerns here. If we are to alter the culture of our work environment, indeed, *self impose* such a change, we need to be absolutely clear about what we are getting ourselves into.

Firstly, it is useful to ask, specifically: what are the problems we are trying to solve with rank and tenure?

Some of the reasons that have been shared with me include:

- a) fortifying our system of academic freedom;
- b) gaining parity with other institutions by using titles that are better understood by the broader academic community;
- c) becoming more appealing to prospective faculty;
- d) being more “attractive” to potential students in light of an increasingly competitive marketplace—particularly in the online environment.

As scholars and educators, it is expected that decisions be grounded in hard evidence and research. Therefore, I felt compelled to ask the executive for tangible evidence that UFV is having difficulty in any of the above areas. While it might be argued that we lack two of the factors that define traditional tenure protections (reasons of program redundancy or financial exigency and, perhaps, dismissal for just cause), it remains unclear as to how big an issue our current system actually is. If we are to base our decision on a difficulty with recruiting faculty, we need to know how the lack of rank and tenure has, specifically, affected our ability to fill positions. Indeed, it may be argued that our relatively limited salaries and inertia with management on advancing SAC recommendations in a timely manner are a greater issue. The argument that we cannot attract students rings hollow considering that UFV has struggled with exceeding its FTE allocations for many, many years. We do good work and it is reflected in our strong student population and, even, our national rankings.

Again, it is unclear how moving to a system of rank and tenure will ensure that we have parity with other institutions when it is openly admitted that rank cannot be tied to salary. In fact, the executive was unable to provide notable examples of other institutions that implement the rigor of gaining tenure and promotion with absolutely no monetary incentives. It might be argued that implementing such a system would present a new risk by detracting potential candidates—they would undergo a much longer “probationary” period and be under significant pressure to prove their value with no compensation at the end of that journey. Of course, it cannot go unnoticed that through a process of grandfathering, those that implement rank and tenure would escape the evaluative process to receive rank and tenure. In other words, the risks to most current faculty are not as great as those to future faculty.

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There are cost implications that have not been carefully and openly discussed in these forums. While it is simple to say that pay will not increase with a system of rank, there are many workload related issues associated with developing committees, evaluation and appeal processes, and the development of criteria for promotion. Indeed, if one examines the legislation that binds us, it is evident that, as a “new” university, the rules of engagement are different. The University Act clearly distinguishes us with the clause 47.1 d) so far as and to the extent that its resources from time to time permit, undertake and maintain applied research and scholarly activities to support the programs of the special purpose, teaching university.

It may be tempting to look at the Thompson Rivers University experience as something close to our own. However, it should be pointed out that TRU operates under different provincial legislation from UFV as their purpose is clearly defined:

- (a) to offer baccalaureate and masters degree programs,
- (b) to offer post-secondary and adult basic education and training,
- (c) **to undertake and maintain research and scholarly activities for the purposes of paragraphs (a) and (b)**

This is much stronger language than what we, at UFV possess. Many of the arguments for rank and tenure speak to the research and scholarship concerns of academic institutions and the “new” university modality challenges us to somehow fit into the bigger picture with less legislative clarity. Fortunately, this means that we can look at where we want to go in the context of the 21st century— a luxury long -standing and traditional institutions do not have. In light of our present legislation and the lack of dedicated financial resources to support rank and tenure, we have a *responsibility* to approach disruptive change with great caution, ensuring that our discourse is grounded in comprehensive research and discussion.

It may be a worthwhile and an informative endeavor to ask faculty about their reasons for coming to UFV to ascertain what qualities and values this organization represents to those who already made the leap to join our team. Currently we enjoy an egalitarian system that may have its own attractions. As we move forward and deal with issues like those of parity with other “universities” we owe ourselves the time, discussion and reflection of what we value most. In this way, we can confidently make changes that are in alignment with those values.

If rank and tenure continues to be evolve through the current process, it may be prudent, in the interests of being fair and fully representative, that there is, at least, a 2/3 majority vote for change. If there is any doubt or confusion about the implications of tenure and rank, there is a plethora of material available that examines this process. In combination with informing ourselves of the benefits and risks, UFV faculty need leadership that is based on integrity and authenticity. In order to make the best decisions for all of us, there should be no secrets and there should be no hidden agendas. If this is the right course of action, then our well-educated and principled faculty— permanent and sessional—will respect it and champion it. Leadership involves making careful and informed decisions that bring the greatest benefits and minimize risks. Thus, it is our **duty** and **responsibility** to analyze the implications of such changes thoroughly in order to ensure that we do not endanger our values or those of our successors.

Like the other new universities in British Columbia, UFV faculty have an incredible opportunity to do something innovative, collaborative and relevant with the situation before us. With strong leadership, good research, and an interest in having a safe dialogue about our values and our future, UFV faculty have a unique opportunity to create a foundation for a fair, grounded, and progressive place of learning where teaching remains the keystone to its success.

As a fellow member of the faculty (and a graduate) who is deeply passionate about protecting the values that define UFV, I challenge all of you to take the time to reflect deeply on what road you wish to travel.

Read. Reflect. Debate. Share.

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Musings on Negotiations, Rank and Tenure, and Related Matters

by Wayne Podrouzek

Editor's Note: As Wayne mentions in his introduction, he sent us the original version of his letter shortly after the May election. Wayne and I agreed that it would make more sense to wait for our new website, with interactive functionality, to be in place before publishing his piece, since he wished for his letter to be generating debate. It took longer than we thought. But, finally, here it is.

Originally sent to the FSA on May 23, 2012. I originally wrote this letter after the election, but over time it had lost some of its immediacy because of the time lag, so I have added some information since then, either identified by date or added in italics. Please forgive me if this is somewhat (ok, I lie, it is pretty) disjointed. I wanted to maintain the thrust of the initial message, but given the delay, include new information as it became available to me, and update as time provided the imperative. To be clear, I agreed that publication might be delayed until this fall when the "open forum" platform would be up and these things might be discussed. I hope that there is sufficient non-apathy and non-learned helplessness regarding our own futures that something like a spirited debate actually ensues.

I would like to thank all those, staff and faculty, who got involved and voted in the election for our chief negotiator. It seems that about 40% of us actually voted. As those who participated and read our statements know, there is a clear distinction between Vicki Grieve's position and my position, and so this was really a vote on how to approach negotiations for our next contract. Dr. Grieve put forward a collegial, collaborative approach to negotiations, whereas I favour a more forceful approach to negotiations. Your decision was pretty clear, approximately 61 percent in favour of a collegial approach, and I am glad for the clarity.

Now that the election is over it is most important that we all throw our full support behind our negotiators. We cannot be at all divided, and in the spirit of unions (associations) we must all hang together or we will certainly all hang separately (to bastardize Paine). So I would like to whole-heartedly honour Dr. Grieve for her willingness to represent us in our negotiations. It is a position that is fraught with frustration, in the negotiations themselves and it seems that, whatever is negotiated, there are some who will be disappointed.

So now we are entering a period of collegial negotiation, and I so look forward to the fruits of this collegiality and collaboration, and the advances that they will bring us. I am optimistic, based on the considered opinion of my colleagues (the voting membership), that it is possible that this is the right approach. Advances will demonstrate that I was wrong in my position, and that Dr. Grieve and her supporters were correct in theirs. I do hope that I was wrong, because I'm into it for exactly what you're into it for: ideally to get ahead, at worst not to fall behind, but no matter what else, not to fare worse than our administrative masters.

In this spirit, I invite our administrative colleagues to demonstrate that we are all in fact labouring under the same load, all sharing the same government enjoiner to do more with less, all equally willing to forego a rise in pay just as we did in our last contract. They can demonstrate this collegiality by publishing all administrative pay scales for the past five years, side by side with faculty and staff pay scales for the same period. Their willingness to do this would demonstrate beyond any doubt the value and importance to them of collegiality at UFV, and the high degree of trust we should continue to place in it.

I look forward to the fruits of the labour of our negotiators. Good luck, and if you feel in any way that I can be of assistance, I am happy to serve our cause.

Again, thanks to those who are involved.

At the end of May, I discovered that the government has apparently "permitted" a 1% raise in each of two years if we can find the money in our collective agreement in savings. This manoeuvre goes by the name of "cooperative gains," and is not really a raise at all—they will likely try to take some non-taxable benefit and reduce it by 1% for a taxable raise, which means that we get a "real" in-pocket raise of perhaps .6%, and we lose long term in terms of benefits. The government gains the revenue from taxes on what we have benefited from in the past.

It is now September 26th, and as I understand it, even the above may have been taken off the table. In the past two weeks, Mr. de Jong (our minister of finance) stated that our NEW austerity measures will include a freeze on university administrative salaries. This leads me to believe that perhaps administrative salaries were not frozen, and thus they

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enjoyed raises in pay while the rest of us laboured under the “do more with less for the sake of the province” dictum. Thus it seems even more imperative that we receive these scales. And just to add on a little twist, administrators sometimes get around salary freezes by “redefining” their positions and renaming them—even though there is no real difference in duties. I would thus like to see, by name, any wage increases and title changes—just to be sure (and not that I don't trust them implicitly).

I notice that we are getting NO INFORMATION about any of this stuff—and, I don't know about you, but that is somewhat worrying to me. The BCGEU just got 4% over two years, but mined from benefits (I believe). We need to resist plundering our general benefits—if benefits are going to be plundered then they should be benefits that not all our members take, and that are taxed when they are taken. A good place to start might be with sabbaticals. We fund them, then we take a 10% hit on salary plus any overloads we might have taken, and then admin sets the criteria (e.g., something publishable was one that I heard recently), then we are taxed on it. I would guess that this self-funded opportunity would be somewhere in the neighbourhood of a \$10,000 to \$11,000 pay hike—all in one year. We pay tax on that money anyway, so we're not losing as much on that end (although we will lose some in the short run because of higher marginal rates, but we would gain it back because of retirement income).

Further, it would appear, from what has been sent out on email, that many of our current executive (FSA) are most interested in getting rank and advancement language in our contract, based on, I would suggest, a mediocre at best show of support for it. As I understand it, about 54% of regular faculty responded to the survey, or about 47% of all faculty, and of those something in the order of 61% wanted (strongly agree or agree) some variant of rank and tenure bargained this round. I'm not a math type, but as I understand it, that means that about 33%-ish of regular faculty expressed a desire for rank and promotion and tenure to be bargained this time around, or 29%-ish of all faculty expressed this desire.

Further, again, I'm not certain we are getting the whole story about rank and promotion. We have been told, for example, that it will not mean a substantial increase in our work load. Interesting, given that it has for THE OTHER INSTITUTIONS THAT HAVE MOVED TO THIS SYSTEM. At the other institutions where they got rank and the increase in workload, they also got extended pay scales. (These points were made by representatives from Thompson Rivers University, B.C., and Mount Royal University, Alberta, at a forum held at Kwantlen University on June 8, 2012. The forum was organized by the Senate Task Force on Academic Rank and Advancement, or TFARA. Both TRU and Mount Royal went through a transition from university colleges without rank and advancement to universities with rank and advancement. See [TFARA video part 2](#), YouTube, starting at 0:52 to 1:50 and 29:10 to 34:30. [See also part 1 of this video.](#)) What was the stated increase in workload? Oh, yes, 22 – 25% larger classes, to an increase of 50% in student-instructor ratios, more committee and service work, and more scholarship expectations. What did they get? \$30,000 to \$50,000 differential in the top of scale. We seem to be on the way to getting the burden but NOT the remuneration. I've heard it said that we can get the rank and advancement language first, and then the differential in pay scales. This seems a tad backwards to me: get the pay first and then increase our work load, or at worst, at the same time.

And, by the way, everyone got the increases in workload, but very, very few got the increase in wages (except, perhaps, administrators). Neat shell game I think. I have the data (see above video) regarding the increase in work load that faculty had to shoulder, so if I am mistaken about the increases in salary I await that data, with bated breath.

And what about tenure? We have working documents, and have had discussions about rank and promotion, but where are the proposal documents regarding tenure? I have heard some faculty note that we don't need tenure language because we have permanence, and there's really no or not much difference. Cool—then if there's no real difference then administration SHOULD HAVE NO PROBLEM negotiating real tenure for us, and not some “special” tenure for a “special” university. If tenure is not forthcoming, then I assume that there is a real difference, and we are, again, on the wrong end of the negotiations stick if we don't get it. My personal thought on this is NO RANK IF NO TENURE. In terms of being a “real” university with “real” academics, real tenure is more important than rank. It would appear that the survey responses indicate that approximately the same proportion of people who are in favour of bargaining rank and promotion also are in favour of bargaining tenure at the same time. But again, real tenure, not special tenure, must be the position. So I assume that rank will not be bargained if tenure is not simultaneously bargained.

There are so many more issues I'd like to address, but I've been told (by my friends and those from whom I have asked for feedback) that the scope of my arguments is too broad and my style too rambling to be very effective (did I mention that I am not a political animal?). Anyway, our “open forum” FSA platform is now up. I'll take whacks at some of the other stuff as things develop. With any luck there will be a free and open, and spirited, debate on that forum. The answer in any democracy is never less speech, it is always more speech (bastardized from a quote regarding the Whatcott Case currently being deliberated by our Supreme Court).

In solidarity - Wayne Podrouzek (Psychology)

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WHAT'S NEXT ON THE FPSE CALENDAR?

For updates and upcoming meetings at the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators, visit their **new** website at
<http://www.fpse.ca>

**Presidents' Council &
Victoria Legislature Lobby Day**
October 16 & 17



Canadian Labour Congress

For more information visit:
<http://www.canadianlabour.ca>

words & vision

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